

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-36 are presently pending in this case. Claims 7-36 are withdrawn.

In the outstanding Official Action, the abstract was objected to; and Claims 1-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(3) as anticipated by Udaka et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,687,472, hereinafter "Udaka"). However, Claim 6 was objected to as dependent on a rejected base claim, but otherwise was indicated as including allowable subject matter if re-written in independent form.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication that Claim 6 includes allowable subject matter.

The abstract is amended herewith to place it in conformance with U.S. practice. No new matter is added. Accordingly, the objection to the object is believed to be overcome.

With regard to the rejection of Claim 1 as anticipated by Udaka, that rejection is respectfully traversed.

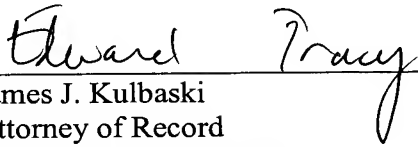
The present application claims priority from Japanese Patent Application No. 2002-239622, filed August 20, 2002. In accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.55(a)(4), enclosed please find an English translation of this application, along with a statement that the translation is accurate. It is respectfully submitted that the enclosed documents perfect the claim to priority to Japanese Patent Application No. 2002-239622 under 35 U.S.C. §119. The filing date of Japanese Patent Application No. 2002-239622, August 20, 2002, antedates the filing date of August 27, 2002 of Udaka. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that Udaka does not qualify as prior art with respect to the present application under 35 U.S.C. §102. Accordingly, the rejection of Claims 1-5 is believed to be overcome.

Since Applicant has not amended the claims in response to any rejection on the merits, a further rejection of these claims based on newly cited prior art in the next communication **cannot properly be considered a Final Office Action.**

Accordingly, the pending claims are believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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